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# Resident`s Perception on Social Impacts of Mega Sport Event:

The Case of 28<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade

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## **Abstract**

# **Resident`s Perception on Social Impacts of Mega Sport Event:**

**The Case of 28<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade**

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Almost all mega sports events have some benefits to the host community. These include but not limited to social, economic and tourism impacts. The current study focused on five common social impact factors of mega sports events. The purpose of this study was to examine the resident's perception on the impact of mega sports events, the effects of hosting and the probability of hosting such events in the near future.

Qualitative research was selected as the appropriate method and semi-structured in-depth interview was used to collect data. A total of ten Almaty residents were selected for interview and the data collected was

analyzed by Miles and Herberman's serval step method. The data was transcribed and translated from the Kazakh language to English and then grouped into sub themes and themes.

The findings of the study indicate that residents consider hosting major sports events as one of the tools to enhance image of the country, promote sport and attract tourists. Generally, the residents had a positive perception towards hosting of 28th Winter Universiade. There were more positive impacts than negative as perceived by the residents.

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**Keywords:** Mega sports events, Social impact, Winter Universiade, Perception and Residents.

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## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Current Context**

Sport is all types of physical activity. Through competitions at different levels sports improves physical ability and mental health. Participating in sports gives the opportunity of social inclusion and enhances individual self-esteem and confidence (Coalter, 2005).

Mega sports events attract different stakeholders such as residents, tourists, sponsors, media, government and external and internal organizations. Hosting mega sports events such as Olympics Games, World University Games, World Cups and Tour de France have various advantages. These advantages are increasing income and job opportunities, minimizing inflation rate, enhancing the image of the country/city and improving tourism. Hosting countries and residents have many effects on the mega sports events. These effects are known as “impacts”. It can be short term or long term, positive or negative. The impacts of mega sports events are environmental, economic, social, cultural, and political (Paul, Bake, Koen, Frank, & Hans, 2016). For instance, Olympic Games in 1988 brought considerable impacts to Korea. The benefit of hosting this sports event was culture exchange, fostering economic development, welfare and social enhancement (Horne, 2007).

Many researchers focused on economic impacts to assist government and event planners in validating sports event bids (Oshimi, Harada, & Fukuhara, 2016). The economic impact of mega sports events is the net changes in the economy caused by a sports event. It is using the sports facilities and services, also the source of visitor costs, public expenditure, employment opportunities and tax revenue (Kim, et al., 2016). For instance, a consultancy firm in a report on 2014 World Cup in Brazil estimated that World Cup might generate 3.63 million jobs per year and 142.39 billion Brazilian real (4.91% of GDP in 2010) income to the Brazilian economy. The income for the population would reach 63.48 billion Brazilian real (2.17% of GDP in 2010) and for the local, state and federal governments' additional tax collection would reach 18.13 billion Brazilian real (0.62% of GDP in 2010). At the same time, 2.98 million extra peoples travel to Brazil. The percentage of travelers grew up to 79% (Barrios, Russell, & Andrews, 2016).

The social impact of hosting mega sports events is gaining interest among researchers. A mega sports events are one of the generators of national and local social development. Socially it is one of the instrument to help change society and reduce the social marginalization and infringement. The possible links exist between sports and self-esteem, work productivity, quality of life, employment, and with other variables.

The social impacts of mega sports events are linked to “intangible benefits” and are used to examine the perceptions of society toward sports events (Inoue & Havard, 2014). Konstantaki wrote that “Social impact can be defined as the effect or consequence of an event on human life, behavior and interactions between individuals such as better knowledge of foreign languages, an improvement on destination’s health, an increase of the community’s life expectancy and creation of new sporting facilities” (Konstantaki, 2008). There are positive and negative effects. According to Kim and Petrick (2005) image improvement and integration considered as common positive impact, awful behavior, traffic difficulties and congestion are perceived as common negative impacts of hosting the mega event (Kim & Petrick, 2005).

In order to get residents support and involve positively in hosting successful mega sports events, event organizer needs to understand what types of impacts there are and how residents perceived these impacts toward hosting the mega sports events. The residents is one of the primary stakeholders that can be a crucial in hosting a successful event.

The aim of this study is to examine residents’ perception on social impacts of 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade and to predict a possibility of residents’ willingness to host the other major international events in the

future. There is no comparable study of how a mega-event such as a World Winter Universiade impacted on the host residents of Kazakhstan as there had never been an event of the magnitude such as the World Universiade Game. Kazakhstan has hosted several international sports events such as the 2011 Asian Winter Games, 2015 World Sprint Speed Skating Championship, 2016 AIBA Women's World Boxing Championship and the 2016 Judo Grand Prix. However, none of these events had the magnitude and international attention that the World Winter Universiade Games brought about. This mega event engrossed more visitors than ever before; it was hosted by biggest city of Kazakhstan and attracted global public attention.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

Specifically, it addresses the following research question and sub-questions:

RQ: What are the perceptions of Almaty residents on the social impacts of 28th Winter Universiade?

Sub-questions:

1. What are the residents' view on hosting of 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade?
2. What are the residents' perception on community growth and development from the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade?

3. What are the residents' perception on community cohesion during the Winter Universiade?
4. What are the residents' perception on socialization opportunities of 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade?
5. What are the residents' perception on the inconvenience during the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade?

### **1.3. Research Objectives**

The purpose of this research is to assess the perceived social impact of the 28th Winter Universiade among Almaty residents.

The objectives of the study are, therefore:

- To identify the view of Almaty residents about hosting 28th Winter Universiade.
- To identify the attitude of Almaty residents about social impacts of 28<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade.

## **Chapter 2. Review of Literature**

### **2.1. Definition of Mega Sports Events**

Getz (2005) describes that “the event as a possibility for the guest or customer to perceive entertainment, social or cultural experience outside an everyday range” (Getz, 2005). There are huge chances that event leave a positive legacy, for example: demonstrating the way to sustainable development, stimulated and inspired the supply chain of presence and destination. Different organizations host events for many reasons. The events have a range of stakeholders such as the host organization, government, media, and sponsors. The event has functions within society that gave participants opportunity to assert their identities, be part of society and share values. The event may attract residents and foreigners, therefore in general social and cultural needs are totally admitted, and economic benefits are produced (Raj, Walters, & Rashid, 2013). The event has different categories and characteristics. Raj, Walters, and Rashid (2013) depending on the purpose of event divided it categories, which is illustrated figure 1. Also, they divided the events into sizes, amount objectives and stakeholders which is illustrated in Figure 2.

Phat (2014) describe common characteristics of events which is

illustrated in figure 3. The size of events depends on scale, complexity and number of stakeholders involved, ranging from small to mega.

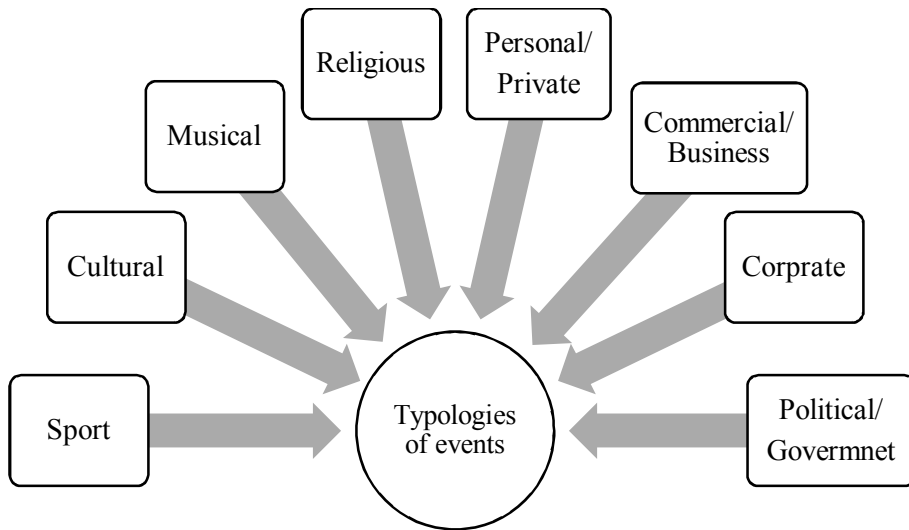


Figure 1. The event categories **(Raj, Walters, & Rashid, 2013)**

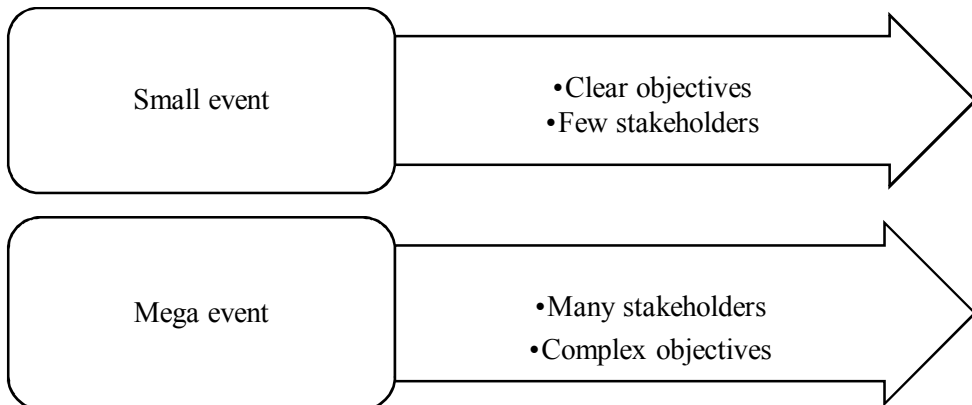


Figure 2. The size link **(Raj, Walters, & Rashid, 2013)**



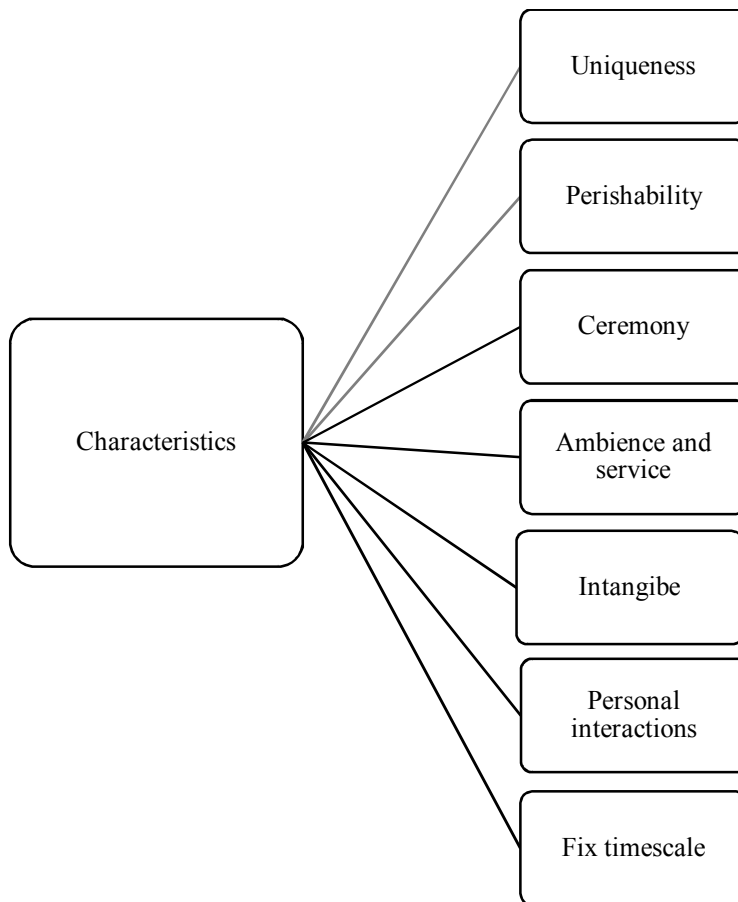


Figure 3. Characteristics of events **(Phat, 2014)**

The differences between mega and small events are the number of incomes and attention that are given to them; mega events engage incredible resources and are aim at leaving a legacy in the host country. During preparation, the line between the mega and small event for urban development is not clear. Entertainment and sports facilities, urban parks, hotels, and monuments are created to accommodate the event (Greene, 2003).

Many different researchers discussed the topic of mega-events. There are different definitions of the mega event in the literature, but they are not yet satisfactory. Hiller (2000) defined a mega event as a short-term event with a long-term effect for the host country (Hiller, 2000). Horne (2007) said that mega event has major results for the host city, area or country ... [and] .... attract media attention (Horne, 2007). Mills and Rosentraub described the mega event as worldwide competitions that create high levels of involvement and media attention that usually need a lot of public money into both event infrastructure, for example, sports arenas to hold the events, and main facilities, such as road, building, or mass transit systems (Mills & Rosentraub, 2013).

Müller (2015) defined a mega event as the fixed duration which attracts a lot guests; have massive reach; comes with substantial costs; has significant impacts on the set-up environment and residents. In conclusion, mega events have two characteristics: first, it is period and size of the event (i.e., amount of days, number of participants and levels of organization); second, it is amount of media coverage and tourist attraction (Müller, 2015).

The term and idea of mega sports events was created as there was necessity to find a way of describing the multi-days sports events such as the Asian Games, Football World Cup, European Football Championship,

Universiade, Olympics, Commonwealth Games and Pan American Games. Mega sports event is large-scale competition which has a high appeal, shows great interest and provides an international meaning (Junior, 2013).

Hosting mega sports events requires building new sports facilities, athlete village and the reconstruction of current parks, recreation areas, parking and transport links that after the event become a legacy for the host city. Also, take care of infrastructures after the event. The mega sports events have also observed as a huge cultural event that has impressive character of mass public treatment and international meaning since they offer a chance to create an environment for comprehension, revealing the cultural variety and related to various values traditions (MauriceRoche, 2000). Also, the mega sports events can help increase the profile of the host country.

#### *2.1.1. World University Games (Universiade)*

Most people do not recognize and understand well about International University Sports Federation (FISU) movement compared to Olympic movement. The World Universiade Games are international sport and cultural event which is staged every two years in different countries. Universiade Games promote peace and cultural exchange among students through sport. World Universiade Games unites students from all over the

world. The World Universiade Games is the ultimate manifestation of the most significant achievements in the field of student sport. There are winter, summer Universiade Games, and World University Championships. The World Universiade Games include all the sports registered by the International University Sports Federation. Athletes and teams have the right to participate in the World Universiade Games after the National Universiade which takes place every year. At the same time, the World Universiade Games attract not only student-athletes but also public, who are fascinated by the sport and who either attended National Universiade Games in the area, where they take place before or watched the World Universiade Games in TV.

The general structure of organizing event and level of Word Universiade Games like Olympic Games. Universiade Games and Olympic Games also share common things like the Opening and Closing ceremony, athlete's parade, sports conferences, education and cultural festivals, new athlete village, a games mascot and so on. The different is the age of participant of World Universiade Games must be between 18 to 25 years and the participant must be a student.

The record participants number was during 26<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade World 2,668 in 2013 Trentino, Italy and a record number of participating

countries were 57 in 2017 Almaty, Kazakhstan during 28<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade (FISU, n.d.).

## **2.2. Arguments for Hosting a Mega Event**

### *2.2.1. Quantifiable and Non-Quantifiable Benefits of Mega Event*

There are various studies as to whether this is a reasonable attempt to conduct a mega sports event, such as the World Cup, Tour de France, Olympic Games, World University Games. Some studies, showed that countries that host mega sports events may bring a “short-term” benefits. It’s growth of the tourism and economics, but these outcomes are temporary. In fact, hosting the mega sports events is more about beyond prestige (Appelbaum, 2014). However, from a strategic perspective, the objectives may include attracting the attention of the world, investment, or creating work places. Amongst these, the economic benefit that maybe help to the city or country collecting public support (Tien, Lo, & Lin, 2011).

Mega sports events often attract the attention of worldwide media, and the publication of this event is an excellent means for worldwide acknowledgment of the city and the promotion of tourist attractions. If mega sports events will be successfully hosted, it may be lead to “long-term positive significances”. It’s industry relocation, inward investment and tourism” (Roche, Mega-events and urban policy, 1994).

There are non-material benefits to host a mega sports events. It could be feelings “pride” or could be feelings “happiness” that the countries’ residents experience. According to Elling et al. (2014), the success of Dutch athletes on the international sports event contributed to the evidence and appearance of nationwide pride and belonging (Elling, Dool, & Den, 2014). The good illustration we can see in Greece’s victory in Portugal “2004 European Football Championship”. The victory brought positive social impact such as nationwide pride. This feeling transferred to 2004 Athens Olympic Games. Greek felt nationwide pride for the national team (Holmes, Huges, & Carlsen, 2015).

### *2.2.2. Quantifiable and Non-Quantifiable Costs of Hosting Mega-Event*

Organizing committee take account only operating expenses of the budget, not general costs like stadiums, the athlete village, media center, roads and others. Also, the general costs usually mentoned at the budget expenditures but are not included in the reports (Zimbalist, 2011). These days the price to host the Olympic Games has extremely increased. For example, the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games charged around 40 billion US dollars while the Sochi Winter Olympic Games cost 50 billion US dollars. Usually, during the Olympic period the tourism is increasing fast. It may offset some of this price, but this is not assured. For example, during

the 2008 Beijing Winter Olympic Games hotel bookings were declined (Griffin, 2015).

Host a mega sports event can cost a lot of money and hard to generate good economic changes. Also, it can bring extra financial difficulties when huge projects become "white elephants" after the events either when these construction had adverse consequences that can be interpreted from other important projects of the country (Tien, Lo, & Lin, 2011). In other words, to host mega sports events such as the Olympics Games or the World Cup is hypothetically danger plan to stimulate economic development (Andranovich, Burbank, & Heying, 2001). Griffin said, "Olympic Games only lead to an over-indebtedness of the city if sports facilities and traffic infrastructure required to stage the Games are hardly existent and if there is no follow-up demand for such a structure" (Griffin, 2015). The host country government most of the cause invests finance to organize the event. Usually, after the Olympic Games investment is recouped. To be financially practicable for the host country, the new infrastructure should be integrated into the economy of the host country, and it must have exact inherited value (Barclay, 2009). However, there are strict requirements for the organizers of mega events. For example, FIFA, the organizer of the World Cup, request that the host country must have around

eight or ten modern football arenas with a capacity of 40,000 to 60,000 people. South Korea expended 2 billion dollars for host 2002 World Cup and constructed ten new football arenas. Japan spent \$ 4 billion on the construction and reconstruction of football arenas (Barclay, 2009). Another issue, many develop countries have these constructions, but they do not meet the requirement of FIFA. The requirement of FIFA football arenas must have built in ten years before the event. If football arenas built later host country cannot use this construction.

The scholars of economic impact often refer to other factors as the main reason of economic benefit, but researchers overstate the real economic benefits for the owners of events (Matheson & Baade, 2002). Moreover, money usually for subsidizing could be misallocated. In the bidding process between countries for the right to host future mega sports events. representatives and other supporters put forward forecasts that predict the estimated economic benefits of hosting competitions. These forecasts are often used as a reason for massive government grants and convince the public that it is not wrong to use limited tax revenues to ensure and encourage this event. However, after games, some countries do not get any economic benefits and has debts (Porter & Fletcher, 2008).

The promise of substantial economic impact justifies state subsidies



for creating infrastructure related to mega sports events. Supporters of grants say that costs must view as investments which bring good economic income. However, there are two reasons why preliminary estimation may not be as significant as the reality of the former public. This "substitution" and "crowding out" effects of tourism. For the first reason, tourists can choose to visit only host city or visit other cities and regions of the country. Thus, net and tourism income will approximately be equal. About second, tourists visit the host city to participate in the mega sports events can displace or otherwise discourage current tourist flow (because of overpopulation, lack of affordable hotels room etc.). Thus, the net effect is approximately the similar (Matheson & Baade, 2004).

However, in addition to spending on infrastructure related to the placement of games, an increased crowd requires extra public safeness, sanitation, and public transport. Also, there are non-economic charges, such as traffic on roads, vandalism, environmental retrogression and interruption of people's livelihoods. The mega sports events could intensify social problems and deepen existing divisions among residents. At the same time, the mega sports events are for the advantage, some of the residents will get work places and additional income (Griffin, 2015). However, sports events lead to ensuring the nobility, which primarily depends on the upper

stratification. The post researches that discoveries economic development or standard of living due to mega sports events should cause some suspicion about the legacy effect of the Olympics otherwise, about the chance factors that turn into real economic benefits for the internal economy (Owen, 2005).

### **2.3. Impacts of Mega Sports Events**

The host community is “peoples who are near to the event place and are people who are perspective to understand the impacts (Knott, Swart, & Visser, 2015). Consequences of mega sports events are usually visible to the population of the county. Those include a quantitative assessment of the changing of socio-economic indicators as well as evaluating shift in the quality parameters of community and environment.

Mega events have a diffrent impacts on the host community. These impacts have to be fully identified, predicted with a high degree of confidence, and managed equitably. All foreseeable positive impacts should be maximized to achieve results and minimized (Bowdin, McDonnell, Johnny Allen, & O'Toole, 2001). Identification of impacts early can lead to better decisions about what measures should be taken and how they should act (Vanclay, 2003). The usual negative impact can be eliminated through awareness and intervention; careful planning before the event, the corresponding operation, and efficient management are crucial if socially-

equitable outcomes to be achieved. The following table shows the different types of impacts that mega events have for the host country. All aspects should be considered by the organizers and interested members before taking such an event with such significance. The table is acclimated from the article of Knott, Swart, and Visser (2015) and social impacts are not listed here. It will be discussed in more detail in the next section (Knott, Swart, & Visser, 2015).

Table 1. Positive and Negative impacts of sport events

Impact area	Positive	Negative
Economic, Tourism and Commercial	Increased expenditure	Price inflation
	Economic benefits in the form of tax revenue	Increase in local tax (to construct
	Employment opportunities	Mismanagement of public funds
	Education and training	Real estate speculation
	Marketing of the host region as a tourism destination	Short-term contract work
	New opportunities for potential investors	
Infrastructure and Physical resources	New and improved infrastructure and local facilities	Infrastructural congestion
	Rejuvenation of	White elephants –

	urban areas	Underused sports and associated facilities after the event
	Propagation of political values and ideology	Suppression of human rights
Sport and Recreation	Introduction to programs services and facilities	Lack of sustainability of these programmes and services after the
	Education and training	Access to needs-based accredited training to enhance employability
	Participation opportunities	Bias towards elite performance
Environmental	Attention to the natural environment	Loss of control over local environment
	Preservation of elements of physical landscape and local heritage	Pollution of nature in and around host region

## 2.4. Social Impact of Mega Sports Events

Among impacts, the social impact is less tangible. Paul et al. (2016) states that “Easy to see, but hard to prove” the social impact that is caused by mega sports events (Paul, Bake, Koen, Frank, & Hans, 2016). Fredline et al. (2003) define social impacts as “any impacts which have any effects on “quality of life for residents” (Fredline, Deery, & Jago, 2003). Mass and

Liket (2011) mentioned that social impacts is “the consequences to human populations of any public or private actions that alter how people live, work, play and relate to one another” (Maas & Liket, 2011). Dinaburgskaya and Ekner (2010) mentioned that social impacts is “the changes in social and cultural conditions, which can be positive or negative, which directly or indirectly result from an activity, project, or program” (Dinaburgskaya & Ekner, 2010).

The positive impacts bring benefit, while negative impact can cause difficulties. Duration of short-term impacts itself express during the event and long-term impacts after the event. The social impact one of the important effects which influence to the community. Deery and Jago (2010) identify three key reasons for studying social impact:

- To accurately assess the social benefits and costs
- To assess residents` support
- To provide a recommendation for how to enhance the positive social impact of mega sports events (Deery & Jago, 2010).

Table 2 shows a range of social impacts of mega sports events that a divided into short-term and long-term (Holmes, Huges, & Carlsen, 2015).

Table 2. Positive and negative social impacts

Positive impacts	Negative impact
Short term (during the event)	
Increased community participation in the event	Increased noise
A shred experience	Increased traffic
Opportunity for entertainment	Antisocial behavior (alcohol vandalism, crime, property damage)
Volunteering opportunities	Loss of amenity (perhaps loss of use of the local park or town hall while the event is running)
Prestige for host community	Social dislocation (residents away from their usual cafes, restaurants, bars, etc. while the event is running)
Increased visitor	Inflated prices
Increased commercial activity (accommodation, retail, hospitality, etc.)	Money spent on the event not on order community need
Long-term (after event)	
Building community pride, community cohesion	Develop of negative community image
Increased tolerance for diversity	Community alienation
Capacity and skills building for the local community	Limited employment opportunities post event
Development of new infrastructure	Mounting public debt servicing requirements and ongoing budget deficits
Job creation	Job losses post event

Another point that should be considered when considering social consequences is that the most common negative consequences are relatively tangible while many positive impacts are less tangible. Difficult to understand and measure positive impacts. For example, during the event, the host country might have to contend with loud noise, congested highways and busy shops. It is a negative impact and obviously tangible. On the other hand, residents enjoy the opportunity to take part in an event and have fun with family and friends, share an experience. Also, residents feel hosting the mega sports events makes their city look good, and therefore they enjoy the prestige of the event. They might also be proud about country, or pride about the national team. It is a positive impact but less tangible (Sharpley & Ston, 2010)

Waitt (2003) studied the social impact of the 2000 Sydney Olympics. He made telephone surveys before and during the games with 24 residents. The study compared different age groups. The young perceive more positive than older respondents. The residents before the event had positive perception and during the event, it was increased. The study found that in 2000 the respondents more would like participate as a volunteer and share the feelings of Olympic spirit. The statistic showed that the best factor of the social impact was “euphoric” which might describe the event. Another

positive factor was social equity. However, some of the president's perception of hosting Olympic Games was negative. They then considered, money which spent to host Olympic could spend elsewhere. Overall in general residents perceived hosting Olympic Games positive. (Waitt, 2003).

Kim and Petrick (2005) examined residents' perceptions on impacts of the FIFA 2002 World Cup in Korea. They found that positive impacts were image enhancement and consolidation. The negative impacts were traffic problems and congestion. The perception of different age group was different. The young age group experienced more negative impacts than old age group. Female perceived highly both impact than male respondents. Also, they compared perceptions of residents with a different occupation. The housewives perceptions showed the highest score of the positive impact of the event and low score of negative impact compared to other occupation groups. Before World Cup perceptions of respondents about was higher than after the event. (Kim & Petrick, 2005). The findings Waitt (2003) and Kim (2005) is similar. The attitudes towards events can change any time.

Ohmann, Jones and Wilkes (2006) explored residents' perception on social impacts of the 2006 Football World Cup. The 132 Munich residents participated at face-to-face interviews. The interviews examined after the World Cup. The study showed that event helped to strengthened residents'



sense of community and relationships between people. These factors viewed as highest positive social impact. Also, a positive result of hosting World Cup was urban regeneration, which improved infrastructure. Noise during the hosting the World Cup considered as most negative impact compared negative impacts like bad fan behavior, crime and prostitution. Overall, residents' perception of hosting the World Cup was positive (Ohmann, Jones, & Wilkes, 2006).

Bull and Lovell (2007) studied the opinions and perceptions of Canterbury residents about the Tour de France. The 408 residents participated in the interview. The road closures and disruption were most negative factors. Also, media covered several times related these issues, which influenced residents' perception about the event. Despite negative impacts residents most of the residents accept hosting Tour de France positively. During the interview, they found that residents believed that the economic benefits of hosting Tour de France more important outcome than social goals. They explain that promoting Canterbury, increasing tourism and increasing local economy are necessary for their country than promoting a community spirit and developing cross-cultural experiences, promoting sport and health (Bull & Lovell, 2007).

Mega sports events can create positive and negative impacts.

Fredline (2005) proposed that social impacts is dependent on culture, economic, environment and history of the host place. Barker (2004) wrote that the environment, rate, place, and period of events stimulate social impact. Social impact can not be perceived as a general set of the results of any sports events. These impacts may be visible at specific event while absent at others. Ohmann, Jones and Wilkes (2006) also mention at their reach that social impact depend on various activities and places. Also, types of social impacts easy to identify after event.

## **Chapter 3. Methodology**

### **3.1. Research Method**

There are varied perceptions of residents toward hosting mega sports events. These perceptions may differ according to gender, age, social status, education, occupation or income (Waitt, 2003). Outside factors like data that the national mass media and government deliver can relate to individual factors (e.g., knowledge, values, past experiences with some similar events). These kinds of outside factors can form the initial perceptions of the event and may also influence residents' perception towards mega sports events (Kim, Gursoy, & Lee, 2006).

To select a suitable research method for this study, the researcher looked for several existing approaches and made a comparison between different research methods. The chosen method is a qualitative method with interviews as data collection technique.

Qualitative research methods are the flexible and easily adaptable to changes in the research environment. Respondents can provide a full description and in-depth information for specific answers, which may explain the respondents' ideas and perception clearly. The scholar could develop a wider and deeper explanation on the different respondent's opinion about the issue (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar, & Newton, 2002).

Using interviews, qualitative research method helped to measure the social impacts of 2017 Winter Universaide and to find out how local residents of city perceived this event. Interviews also helped in a thorough examination of the views, experiences, and beliefs and allowed the interviewer to respond in more detail.

### 3.2. Research Participants

The interview was conducted with ten local residents of Almaty city. The participants belonged to different occupations and backgrounds. The participant's age range is 20-50 (figure 4) and this represents most of the population of Kazakhstan which includes those peoples who are working and studying.

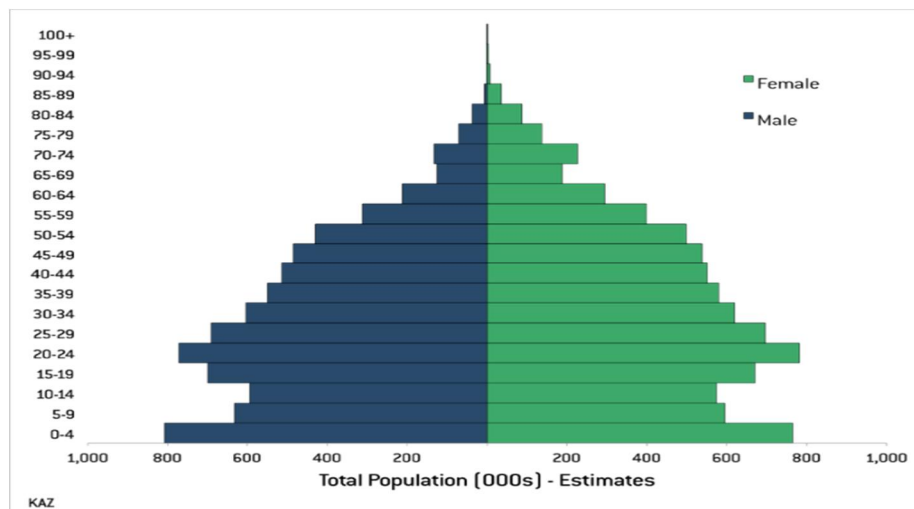


Figure 4. Population of Kazakhstan

### **3.3. Data Collection**

Interviews were conducted through the skype. The semi-structured interview technique was used. It helped respondents to answer questions from a general topic to more specific insights. The interviews included open-ended questions, which help understand opinion and view of local residents in detail as much as possible.

The interview questions were designed in English and then were translated into Russian.

#### **Approximate interview questions:**

1. Could you please briefly introduce yourself? Please your name, age, and occupation.
2. What do think about hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade in Kazakhstan? Why do you think so?
3. Why Administration of city hosted 28th World Winter Universiade?
4. What did you like in the 28th World? Why do you like it?
5. What did you dislike during the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade? What was the reason?
6. What kind of community development opportunities brings to residents of Almaty city, hosting 28th World Winter Universiade? Why do you think so?

7. How hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade was an influence on the community unity? What do you think about?
8. How hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade was an influence on resident's relationship? What do you think?
9. What did you think about the situation on the road, parking place, supermarket and shops during the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade?  
How did you cope with it?
10. What can you say about fans' behaviors during the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade?

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) analysis model was used for the analysis of data (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). This model was recommended as the most suitable framework to analyze the notes made during the interview process. The current researcher followed these stages. Firstly, the researcher collected data. After recording interviews and translating from Russian to English languages then compressed the data. Next stage was making themes and subthemes. The last stage was interpreting the data.

### **3.5. Ethical Considerations**

Interviewer requested verbal consent for participation from the

interviewees before commencing the interview. The interview took place once the respondents verbally consented. Respondents also had to verbally confirm that they were free not to answer some of the questions from the questionnaire, should they be perceived as sensitive and made them feel uncomfortable. Moreover, the aim of the interview was explained to the respondents before the interview was conducted. Interviewer informed that a third party would be included for translating the data.

### **3.6 Limitations**

One of the limitations was that collecting data in the Russian language which create omissions of some of the information while translation. The researcher needed translation assistance from a third party who can adequately express in Russian and in English.

## **Chapter 4. Findings**

This chapter presents the results of the interviews, views of local residents about hosting mega sports event and assessment of local residents about the social impacts of hosting 28<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade 2017. The interview analysis follows a dialogue of findings and their links to literature review to measure if the data found supports or contradicts the existing information.

The chapter was divided into three parts. The first part of the chapter participant's background, the second part is about the major themes and subthemes that were determined during data analysis from interviews. The third part presents and discusses the finding of the study

### **4.1 Participants Information**

The interview questions settled on research sub-questions. Interview questions consist of background information of participant, the opinion of a resident about hosting 28<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade 2017, and the perceptions of local residents on social impacts.

The interview participants were local residents of Almaty city. The criteria for selection of residents to this study are: living in Almaty more than ten years, presented in Almaty before and during the 28<sup>th</sup> Winter Universiade 2017. Variations in age, gender, material status and professions



are also considered. The table 3 shows information about interview participants.

Table 3. Participants

№	Name	Age	Occupation	Marital status
1	Bauyrzhan	40	Professor of Mathematics	Married
2	Aliya	45	Administrative Assistant	Married
3	Kuralai	39	Businesswoman	Married
4	Gulbaram	28	General Director	Single
5	Batyr	26	Sport manager	Married
6	Assem	28	Householder	Married
7	Amantai	50	Businessman	Married
8	Saida	30	Travel Agent	Single
9	Shynar	24	Marketing Manager	Single
10	Galiya	24	Sport manager	Single

#### 4.2 Determination of Findings by Theme and Sub-theme

These steps were used for analyzing the data:

- The first step was translating and transcribing the data.
- The second step was categorizing information
- The third step was identifying the theme and subtheme
- The fourth step was interpreting the data (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003)

Table 4, illustrated how residents think about hosting the event and judge social impacts of 28th World Winter Universiade. The themes and sub-themes set up based on opinion and answers of interviewees.

Table 4. Themes and sub-themes

Research question	Sub-question	Theme	Sub-theme
What are the perceptions of Almaty residents on the social impacts of 28th winter Universiade?	What are the residents' view on hosting of 28th World Winter Universiade?	Kazakhstan image on the world stage	Image by media coverage Tourist attraction Sports participants
	What are the residents' perception on community growth and development from the 28th World Winter Universiade?	The quality of life Almaty city residents	Employment Well-being Knowledge
	What are the residents' perception on community cohesion during the Winter Universiade?	The unity of Almaty city residents	Feelings of pride Feelings of happiness
	What are the residents' perception on socialization opportunities of 28th World Winter Universiade?	Interaction of Almaty city residents	Communication among residents' Personal relationship
	What are the residents' perception on the inconvenience during the 28th World Winter Universiade?	Disruption of community life	The culture of Kazakh people “Hospitality.”

### 4.3 Findings by Theme and Sub-theme

#### Theme 1. Kazakhstan image on the world stage

According to the responses of the interview, 28th World Winter Universiade attract world attention for a while. The government used 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade as tool for enhancing national image and promoting sport among the population. The following fragments came up in the interview; (1) image by media coverage, (2) tourist attraction, (3) sports participants.

##### *Sub-theme 1. Image by media coverage*

28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade attracts attention on TV, headlines in newspapers and via the internet (live streams and social media). It was broadcasted in different countries. Through hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade, Kazakhstan was in the center of occurrences for a while.

*“An opening ceremony of the Universiade was broadcasted live on the international sports channels in 80 countries. The program of the open ceremony includes the history of Kazakhstan, culture, a diversity of traditions and crafts. The competition was broadcasted in International and Post-Soviet Union Countries channels. Also, I am sure that there was short observation video about Kazakhstan” (by Aliya).*

The international media attention can increase host country's visibility and strengthen host's image. They demonstrate competence in the organization management and social integrity compliance with norms and practices. Also, international media cover political, economic, and demographical situation of the country.

#### *Sub-theme 2. Tourist attraction*

Richards and Wilson (2004) note that the image of a city formed by a mega event can bring a positive opinion of the city and be a perfect tourist destination place (Richards & Wilson, 2004). The respondents were talking how many foreigners visited Almaty during the 28th World Winter Universiade and how it would influence the image of country and tourism.

*“Almaty had over 30 000 guests and tourists. The 28th World Winter Universiade involved 127 international judges and around 600 national technical officials. I assume these people shared about Kazakhstan and their experience on social media (Facebook, Instagram) or after arrived back home. It will give positive and negative effect on the image of the country; we will see near future” (by Gulbaram).*

The national image refers to the perception and opinion of the world

community about the politics, economy, culture, and citizens of a given country. In other words, a country is viewed by foreign audiences. The better perception and opinion are created when they visit the host country.

### *Sub-theme 3. Sports participants*

Hosting mega sports events influence the local interest and inspire people or do sports activities. This process is called as the trickle-down effect, the demonstration effect (Wicker & Sotiriadou, 2013). This effect was found during the interview. Seven respondents said that they are inspired by the athlete and the event during the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade.

*“My family and I visited several ice hockey matches of Winter Universiade Games. Also, at home we were watching another sports athlete’s performance. The performance of athlete impressive. It gives the enthusiasm (encouraged) to us, and children do some winter sport” (by Amantai).*

The trickle-down effect is “a technique by which people are inspired by elite sport, athletes or sports events to start playing sports (Wicker &

Sotiriadou, 2013). This effect can encourage people who already doing sport, stopped sport to do sport and who switches between sport activities.

## Theme 2. The quality of life of Almaty city residents

Community benefits are social benefits (Holmes, Huges, & Carlsen, 2015). The quality of life is one factor of social benefits. During the interview, respondents highlight the community benefit factor such as “quality of life” which appear in employment, well-being, and knowledge. The following fragment came up after interview; (1) employment, (2) well-being, (3) knowledge.

### *Sub-theme 1. Employment*

The International University Sports Federation (FISU) require hosting city to construct new infrastructures such as athlete village and sports facilities. Also, reconstructed roads and existing sports facilities must fit international standards. Therefore, administration of Almaty city built new sports facilities, reconstructed roads and old sports facilities. The respondents said that it was a huge project. The construction companies had to attract more workforce.

*“The construction companies employ new workers because the*

*project was huge. The administration of city built two big sports facilities with parking place and fundamentally reconstructed old sports facilities, roads.” (by Gulbaram).*

*“All new facilities are functioning. There are different new sports clubs, sports schools. Universiade gave new job place for different professions because there are working service staff, administration staff and coaches” (by Kuralai).*

Also, respondents talked about decisions of city administration about all facilities that have been built for Winter Universiade. It was how to use these new facilities after 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade.

### *Sub-theme 2. Well-being*

The administration of the city planed that after 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade the Athletes Village will be given for citizens to rent it with the possibility of buying it in near future. Citizens were able to purchase those homes according to the rental-purchase agreement, whereby they cover the costs of home for a period of 15 to 20 years without over paying it. This accommodation is given to the families with many children, incomplete

families, disabilities, orphans, military personnel, special government employees.

*“The apartments (Athletic Village) which were built for Universiade after the Games were given to rent with the subsequent ransom in future for vulnerable populations of the city” (by Bauyrzhan).*

Through hosting 28th World Winter Universiade vulnerable populations of the city had the opportunity to have accommodation. It brought well - being to some citizens of the city.

### *Sub-theme 3. Knowledge*

Kazakhstan is a developing country. There are some variations in education level among people. Kazakhstan still does not have a lot of high-class professional experts in sports management and medicine. According to the respondents, the sports managers and doctors had a training program.

*“Organizing Committee invited professionals to teach sports manager how to organize the mega sports event. Through this Universiade, we got more qualified sports managers” (by Batyr).*



Also hosting the 28th World Winter Universiade enhanced people's knowledge about winter sport. The information about the sport was everywhere on TV, social media, radio and newspaper. Every day mass media announced information about event and sports. It was not possible to ignore the information.

*“Universiade gave the opportunity to increase information about winter sport. For example, about curling” (by Assem).*

### Theme 3. The unity of Almaty city residents

Hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade brought all people together despite age, race, religion and social status. Paul et.al. (2016) said that “the great characteristics of event communities are that they enable relationships to form across age, gender, and social class boundaries that are not normally broken outside the fun space of events” (Paul, Bake, Koen, Frank, & Hans, 2016). The respondents during the interview told that mega sports events such as 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade broke any social boundaries and united people. The visitors of 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade supported, cheered and exulted together the national team and athletes. The following fragments came up after the interview; (1) feelings of pride, (2) feelings of

happiness.

*Sub-theme 1. Feelings of pride*

The Kazakhstan national team's performance was incredible during the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade. The success at 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade led to feelings of pride among citizens who came to watch and support their athletes.

*“My friends and I went to support national ice hockey team of Kazakhstan. Any time our team wins. I was feeling proud of the national team, but not only me also the people who were in the arena. Some of them shouted that they are proud” (by Galiya).*

Residents not only were proud of the team and athletes but also were proud of organizing and hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade.

*“The residents of Almaty and all residents of Kazakhstan was proud that Kazakhstan could host 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade well”. There was a lot of discussion at the beginning about hosting the Universiade between residents, The main question was whether or not Kazakhstan could host well or could not (by Bauyrzhan).*

### *Sub-theme 2. Feelings of happiness*

According to the respondents during the interview, residents also felt feelings of happiness. The reason why it happened, depend upon a background of residents and sports experience.

*“I felt feelings of happiness because of the result of an athlete during the Universiade” (by Saida).*

*“I felt feelings of happiness because I could be part of the mega event” (by Batyr)*

### Theme 4. Interaction of Almaty city residents

According to the respondents hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade gave the opportunity to socialize more with their family, friends, colleagues and with other residents. The following topic presents two sub-themes: communication among residents and personal relationship.

#### *Sub-theme 1. Communication among residents*

According to the respondents hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade gave the opportunity to communicate with other people and met new people.

Communication is one of the main tools of sociability and the foundation of all human relationship.

*“I visited all matches of Kazakhstan ice hockey team. I met new people and some of them became my friends. In the beginning, it was not easy to talk or communicate. The different factors were influenced. For example, one the fact that you didn't know a person. However, in middle of the event barriers was broken. I think the fact that you wanted to share feelings and thoughts about the games as a fan, played a key role” (by Amantai).*

28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade also united people together, despite their age, gender and profession. Also, it helped residents to combine work and leisure together.

*“I am a busy person. I have to spend most of my time at work. Communicate and have fun with friends quite difficult for me. I and my friends worked at Universiade because different company and organization involved to organize the event. Universiade united us in one, we got opportunity communicate every day and spend time more together. (by Shynar).*

### *Sub-theme 2 Personal relationship*

All interview participants visited 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade with their family, friends, relatives or colleagues. The respondents told how it influenced their relationship with others. Specifically, how informal communication helps to build or rebuild the personal relationship.

*“... Hosting Universiade was big festival and holidays. My colleagues and I went several times visited the event. It gave the opportunity to discuss sports, athletes and our hobbies. In other words, it gave chance to talk about other things beside work” (by Aliya).*

Hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade helped building and improving the resident's relationship with family, friends, relatives and colleagues.

### Theme 5. Disruption of community life

Mega sports events attract the attention of large crowds, and there is a high probability of occurrence in inconvenience factors. The administration of the Almaty city developed a general plan where all aspects related to the hosting of the event were mapped. There was an issue on the road and on parking places, for that reason residents did not fully satisfy with the

organization of the event. Despite these facts residents did not accept it as a negative factor. During the interview residents explained their view. There were two reasons: Kazakhstan hosted such a mega sports events for the first time and the second reason is related to culture. The sub-theme: Culture of Kazakh people - "Hospitality.

*The sub-theme 1. The culture of Kazakh people "Hospitality."*

The hospitality is a feature of Kazakh culture. The culture related to treating guest is a good host and gracious with a guest. The history of "be a good host and gracious with a guest" came from the past. Kazakh were nomadic and spread across the land. It was reasonable to be generous with the visitor since the host did not know when they would need the same hospitality. In this context, even though there were traffic jams on the road and huge crowd everywhere, residents did not accept those as negative impacts. They considered those as a temporary inconvenience situation.

*"We are a very hospitality nation. The guest for us as God. I am sure that many residents want to show their hospitality, friendship and tolerance. There was traffic on the road and crowded in shops. I did not complain and I knew that was temporary and would finish soon. I want to show guest only positive side of Kazakh people" (by Kuralai).*

## **Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusion**

### **5.1 Semi-Structured Interview Discussion**

The mega sports events now are multimillion-dollar business, attracting the interest of world media, investments, political players, travel participants, and spectators. It is “magic dust of sports events” (Paul, Bake, Koen, Frank, & Hans, 2016). However, after interviewing with people it is revealed that hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade transforms the lives of local citizens, in the short and long run.

This study was about how residents assessed and perceived the social impact of hosting 28th World Winter Universiade. The current study was ultimately aimed at filling the void in the literature on sports management by developing a conceptual framework with a careful reflection of a mega sports events.

Kazakhstan is a young country which is developing dynamically in all directions, especially in sports area. Kazakhstan has brands that make an image of the country. There is oil, spaceport “Baikonur”, Semipalatinsk nuclear Test Site, Pro Team Astana cycling team (Brands that made Kazakhstan image, n.d). Hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade was another good opportunity for the government to enhance the image in the world by media and public. International coverage reached a total 59 TV nations,

across Europe, Asia and Oceania. The coverage was viewed by 364.4 million people. Around 16 000 tourists visited the country. One of the examples the EUSA news about the opening ceremony of the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade was “Participants were taken through a journey, exploring the rich history of Kazakhstan. A parade of ancient and traditional costumes of the nation’s past and legends of the country awed the audience” (European University Sports Association, 2017).

However, hosting the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade was a challenge. After hosting the event the image could change to negative or positive. Yao (2010) explored how hosting mega sports events influenced to the image of the host country. He wrote that “Studies on the Olympics held in South Korea, Spain, Australia and Greece showed that the host countries became more visible in the international media, and the tone of the reports about them became more positive over time. Stories about the host countries published after the games depicted them as less threatening to the global status quo and to common values. The Olympics held in Beijing in 2008 is a case in point. Considered by many as an overwhelming success, its opening and closing ceremonies have been praised the world over, and the number of viewers who followed the games exceeded expectations. Despite this, China still received a fair amount of negative foreign media coverage during and



after the games. These less than palatable news reports came on the heels of protests the Chinese incursion in Tibet and the country's general national policies toward human rights" (Yao, 2010).

During the interview the trickle-down effect was detected. The elite sport and sports event have tendency of inspiring peoples of various ages to do exercise or become more active (Wicker & Sotiriadou, 2013). Ramchandani and Coleman (2012) examined the inspirational effects of three major sports events in the United Kingdom. They found that key factors of inspiration are directly related to athletes and event (Ramchandani & Coleman, 2012). The trickle-down effect helps inspire people to do sports activity. Same time studies say that trickle-down effect will not affect who have never practice sport or do exercise (Wicker & Sotiriadou, 2013). There are no existing studies about the level of inspiration toward 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade.

Interviewees discussed different types of wellbeing factors. Following factors of wellbeing were reveled after the interviews vulnerable populations of the city obtained, sport organization managers improved their knowledge, residents improved their knowledge about winter sport and residents found jobs. The magnitude of wellbeing factors was not huge, but it brought changes to residents' life. One good example in the past was that,

over 580 000 job places were created for hosting XXVI Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta (Malfas, Houlihan, & Theodoraki, 2004)

Hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade also united residents and improved cohesion. The residents felt pride when showcasing the aspect of their culture, traditions and cheering for a national team which in turn gives them a spirit of belongingness to their culture and country. It strengthens the tie between the local people. The incorporation of a 'support' or "cheering" in sports events, which led to the normal social boundaries (Paul, Bake, Koen, Frank, & Hans, 2016).

Usually sports achievements give a different feeling to residents and the reason depends on different factors. The respondents said that success of Kazakhstan national team during the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade gave feelings of pride and happiness. Also, the feeling of pride and happiness was due to the historical moment of hosting the Universiade in their motherland. The factors that influenced to these are related resident's sports experience and background. Hallmann, Breue and Kühnreich (2013) explored what kind of factors affect and how many the residents feel pride and happiness when athletes succeed in an international sports events. The result was that 66,2 % residents of Germany felt pride and 65% felt happiness. The factors that affected residents' pride and happiness were interest in the elite sport,

sports participation and socio-economic variables (Hallmann, Breuer, & Kühnreich, 2013).

According to respondent's opinions another positive outcome of hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade was opportunity to, build and rebuild a relationship with their family, friends, and colleagues. The sports event acted as platform for socialization. There is less information about strengthened relationship via sports events. Chalip (2006) explored the relationship between sports events and social layer. In his study, he mentioned new social relations are formed, or existing relationship become stronger through sports events (Chalip, 2006). Zhang et al., (2007) wrote about "Socialization value of sports events". Sports events gave the opportunity to be entertained, communicate and find people who share your views and knowledge (Zhang, et al., 2007).

Almaty city residents did not accept the traffic jam and a lack of parking places as negative impacts but accepted as a temporary inconvenience. Administration of city developed a master plan where all aspects related to the hosting of the event but could not avoid inconvenience. In this case, culture played a big role. For example, administration of the city should not only warn residents in advance of restrictions on traffic, but they could also offer alternatives to avoid inconvenience. The possibility for

residents to use free public transport during the event or to offer free or alternative parking spaces for residents who live while the Universiade could be an excellent way to reduce the perception of the negative consequences of the event.

## **5.2 Summary of Findings**

Every situation is unique; there are some changes apparent and some of them unspoken. Kazakhstan hosted mega sports events for the first time in the history of independence. The purpose of this study was to explore the perception of Almaty city residents in relation to social impacts and views about hosting 28th World Winter Universiade.

Overall, residents' view of hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade was positive. Positive impacts such as improvement of well-being, knowledge, relationship, infrastructure and strengthen community were perceived as key benefits from hosting 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade. The negative impacts such as a traffic jam and lack of parking places were not subsequently identified as issues by respondents. This study has allowed, however, a deeper understanding of the nature of the social impacts that occur at specific event and place. The findings of this study are in line with existing studies about perception and attitude of hosting mega sports events.

### **5.3 Limitations of Research**

This study was limited to Almaty city residents. The objective of the study was delimited to five factors of social impacts. Interviews conducted in Kazakh and Russian languages, an aspect which brought some incompleteness during the analysis of data. Some of the ideas were not easy to clarify in English.

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